RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 24th May, 1995/3rd Jyaistha, 1917 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the Clock.
The Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

वैगन इंडिया लिमिटेड से वैगनों की खरीद

*681. **श्री जयन्त राय:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि रेल मंत्रालय ने 50 प्रतिशत वैगनों की खरीद वैगन इंडिया लिमिटेड से करने का निर्णय किया है;

(ख) क्या बर्न स्टैन्डर्ड, ब्रेथवेट एंड जेस्सप इंडिया जैसे सरकारी क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों को रुग्णता से बचाये रखने हेतु वैगन आपूर्ति के शेष 50 प्रतिशत सप्लाई आर्डर दिये जायेंगे; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

रेल मंत्री (श्री सी॰ के॰ जाफर शरीफ): (क) से (ग) 1995-96 में चल स्टाक कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत उद्योग को आदेश दिए जाने वाले माल डिब्बों में से फिलहाल 50 प्रतिशत की वैगन इंडिया लि॰ के जरिए खरीद करने का प्रस्ताव है। इनका वैगन इंडिया लि॰ के प्रस्ताव के अनुसार सार्वजनिक और निजी क्षेत्र की इकाइयों के बीच आबंटन किया जाएगा अर्थात् 60 प्रतिशत सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की इकाइयों के लिए और 40 प्रतिशत निजी क्षेत्र की इकाइयों के लिए आर॰एस॰पी॰ के अंतर्गत शेष 50 प्रतिशत माल डिब्बों की खरीद एक प्रतिस्पर्द्धात्मक निविदा के आधार पर देश में करने का प्रस्ताव है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question No. 681. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, ... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Madam, ... (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So many people? (*Interruptions*). Let me make an observation. I had seen that day, on the television in my room, what was going on in the House. Then I discussed it. The Chairman asked this question to be put there because the answer was not complete. Otherwise, it was listed for another day. I would now start from the person whose supplementary was the last that day, so that we can finish it fast without taking too much time. Who was the person? Mr. Basu. Please be brief. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Shall I start, Madam?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, of course. (*Interruptions*). I have seen you.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, please look at this side also.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, I have seen.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Madam, the fact of the matter is that there was a boom in the wagon industry in the late '60s. But in the early '70s, we had a crisis in the supply and manufacture of wagons because of lack of requirements. In 1974, the Wagon India Limited was formed as a joint-sector company by private and public units to ensure that there is an equitable supply of requirements to all the wagon units so that they could survive. So, there is no question of cartelisation as the Minister was trying to indicate the other day. Now, the point is, as a result of a Cabinet decision, this decision to form the Wagon India was taken. But, only two years back, the Railway Ministry had gone back on the agreed position of the Cabinet and decided that it had to be procured through open tenders. We would like to know what the specific circumstances were in which the old decision of the Cabinet was reversed and part of the wagons were sought to be procured through open tenders. That is the first part.

The second part of my question is this. The Minister was not in a position to explain even the latest position. Between the 9th and 10th March, 1995, even the agreed position of procuring 50 per cent of the wagons through the Wagon India was violated. Now, the position is that almost 70 per cent of the wagons are going to be procured through open tenders. Why has this change taken place, in the prinicipal decision as a whole and the specific decision,

on the night of the 9th March, 1995?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, in fact, last time also, I tried to convince hon. Members on this issue. The Wagon India is an association representing both public sector and private sector industries.

So far as our purchasing is concerned—the Railways' requirement of wagons through the Railway Budget which the hon. House has voted—we would be giving 60 per cent to the Wagon India Limited for its distribution amongst its units in respect of which we have given clear guidance to the Wagon India Limited that 50 per cent should go to the public sector industries and there is no question of any change in our stand so far as this aspect of the question is concerned. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Basu, I am not allowing. Let me make it clear that the Minister is trying to explain the position. Now, if I allow you to have an argument session, then it would not be proper. We can have a Half-an-Hour discussion or one-hour discussion and we can discuss it. But, as the question is listed today, I will give a chance to the maximum number of people to put questions. But, if you still feel, then we can have a discussion later on. Now, since the Chairman has given time by going out of his way, I would allow this to happen this way only.

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: महोदया, जैसा कि आपने कहा, मैं ज्यादा समय इस सवाल पर नहीं लेना चाहता हूं। सिर्फ एक सीधा सवाल पूछना चाहता हूं। वैगन इंडिया इंडस्ट्री विभाग में 1974 में लिया गया था, इंडस्ट्री विभाग का हिस्सा बना। यह कैबिनेट डिसिजन के बाद बना। आपने जो फैसला किया उस फैसले के पहले आपने कैबिनेट का एप्रूवल लिया या नहीं लिया, मैं इतना ही जानना चाहता हूं।

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, it is not the question of any Cabinet approval or anything like that. We have not gone against the Cabinet decision. It is only to test the price that last year we gave just 10 per cent of it, to test the market, and we saved about three crores of rupees and what is it that we are expecting from the Wagon India Limited and the public sector? We only want to improve their efficiency and nothing else. After all, if the public sector is able to reduce the prices, that helps the workers themselves.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Madam, actually, the thrust of the main question is that there was an agreement between the Railways and the industry that 50 per cent of their requirement should be given to the Wagon India Limited and the remaining 50 per cent may be by tenders. Here, the confusion is whether the Railways have followed this agreement or not. This is number one. The second point is whether the public sector undertakings, mentioned in part (b) of the question, are covered by the Wagon India Limited or not. Thirdly, has the Ministry retracted from its agreement on these two lines or not? Now, the first point is that they have agreed to buy 50 per cent of wagons from the Wagon India Limited and whether the Ministry has retracted its steps. Secondly, some public sector undertakings mentioned in part (b) of the question, have they been covered by the Wagon India Limited or not? Whether the interests of the three public sector undertakings have been taken care of by the Railways or not is the moot question. Thirdly, has the Ministry violated the agreement or not and has it taken care of the interests of these public sector undertakings? This is the main question.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, we have not violated any agreement and regarding whatever we give to the Wagon India Limited, there is a very clear understanding and a very clear directive that the Wagon India Limited should cover the interest of the public sector undertakings. That is the priority.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: What about the three public sector undertakings?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: They are covered under the Wagon India Limited.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, my hon. friend, Shri H. Hanumanthappa, has given the correct picture regarding the question. It is a question of public importance and the interest of the public sector is involved. The question arises whether the interest of the public sector is being protected by the Government Departments or not. In this regard, we all feel really alarmed and we all want the answer from the Minister because most of units

of the wagon-producing industry, belonging to the public sector and the private sector, are in West Bengal.

And since there has been a decline in the order of the Railway Board, there is a fear of large-scale closure, retrenchment and all that and the Government of West Bengal has also repeatedly taken up the matter with the Railway Board. Madam, the main supplementary that arises is whether the Minister will agree that there is a shortage of wagons in the country. Since there is a shortage of wagons in the country, there is a diversion of cargo transport from rail to road and because there has been a diversion, more Government money is being spent. For every lorry or every transport vehicle run on road, we have to pay in foreign exchnage for purchase of petrol and diesel. Therefore, the economy that you would like to take advantage of is being more than counterbalanced by the loss to the public exchequer because we are spending more of our public exchequer to pay for lubricants, to pay for diesel and petrol. The money is paid out of our foreign exchange. Therefore , my question is: Will the Minister agree that there is a shortage of funds and as a result, there is an increase in road transport and that this shortage arises out of the shortage of funds in the Railway Ministry? Will the Minister also agree that the shortage of funds can also be attributed to non-realisation of dues of Railways from different Electricity Bords and also to non-realisation of their dues from the Ministry of Finance? Madam, if this is a fact that you don't have the money to purchase wagons, the Railway money is not being paid by the Ministry of Finance and the Railway money is not being paid by the State Electricity Boards, this has direct relevance... (*Interruption*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, I am very grateful to the hon. Member who has pointed out the problems faced by the Railways. It is a fact that the Railway finances have been in a very difficult situation. Our funds are placed with the Finance Ministry, there is a depreciation of funds, and even in respect of pension a certain amount which is always deposited with them gets blocked; that is not being allowed to be used. And secondly, even the Electricity Boards do not give us the money. Approximately Rs. 1,200 crores is DRF and another Rs. 200 crores is blocked in respect of pension and approximately Rs. 1,000 crores is due from the Electricity Boards. Rs. 2,200 crores get just blocked.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: What is the depreciation?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: I cannot give the details now. That is not the question. The fact is that all this comes in the way.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the pension money?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: For pension money every year we take out some funds for the retired employees and keep a separate fund. That money is kept with the Finance Ministry. As and when we need, we use our money and keep getting is reimbursed. All that is a question of captial being made available for use. That is a fact.

So far as running and managing the system is concerned, Shri Gurudas Das Gupta pointed out one thing that road traffic is increasing and the traffic is not coming to the railways. That is the traffic which generally the Container Corporation is taking care of. That is now picking up very well and in course of time, I am sure, with the expansion of our network, Railways will be able to get more traffic.

So far as the basic question of requirement of wagons is concerned, Madam, we go by our requirement. There is not so much shortage of wagons, but what happens is, somethimes this kind of a hue and cry is made that there is a shortage of wagons. One of the basic responsibilities of the Railways relates to transportation capacity, particularly wagons. Madam, I had the privilege to serve in the Coal Ministry. I know the problems of both the Ministries, Coal and Railways. There is no question of shifting the responsibility from one to the other because we function as one Government. Today the character of traffic has changed. Earlier we used to carry foodgrains from the north to the south. Today that is not so. Earlier we used to carry cement from the

south to the north. Today that is not so. So, the traffic pattern has changed. The lead has come down. So far as coal is concerned its production goes up, during winter. Its production in summer get affected because it cannot be stored at pitheads due to fear of fire. Its production comes down during the monsoon because of rain. It is only during winter that it is produced. In early summer this year coal production was below target. Therefore, in the case of power, sometimes we personally monitor it. If we had not taken care perhaps, the position of the power houses, where in summer the hydels go down and the dependence on thermal becomes more, would have been worse. It is, therefore, not a question of wagon shortage or allowing traffic to go to the roads. I do concede Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta's point. We have to make greater efforts, keeping the fuel economy in mind, to get the road traffic to the rail. In the Railways there is nothing like marketing. The Railways go on depending on conventional traffic, depending on the core sector. It has not done the marketing properly. Now there is a need to do it. We should do it. If anybody has a vision, he has to bear in mind the fuel economy and try to get more and more traffic to the rail. That is our effort. That is precisely.... (*Interruptions*).....

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will you ask the Finance Minister to release your money worth Rs. 1,000 crores?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: We have been making repeated requests. This time, I must say, the Railway Convention Committee has also come to our rescue. I must acclaim that help gratefully. I think your support and voice will help us in getting something more from the Finance Ministry.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri V. Narayanasamy. (*Interruptions*)... I will call you. I will call according to the time at which I got your names.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam Deputy Chairman, I have no doubt in my mind that the public sector wagon industry has to be protected. It should be protected when it is competitive. I would like to know specifically from the hon. Minister, when the Minister has said that there are some private wagon industries and public sector wagon industries in the Wagon India Ltd., what the break-up is. I would like to know whether the private industries which are manufacturing wagons, though they are in the Wagon India Ltd., would also be protected. They should not be given any protection. If the public sector is to be given protection we welcome it. But some of the private industries, when they join the combine, they should not be given protection. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister how many private sector industries, who have joined the consortium, are there. Why are you giving them protection through the Wagon India Ltd.? That is, Madam, the first part of my question.

उपसभापति: बस एक ही पूछ लीजिए।

I have got so many names.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Therefore, I will be very brief, Madam. I am not going beyond the subject. I have got only one more point. The second point is this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether by going in for tenders the prices of wagons have come down. What is the benefit that the Railways are getting by going in for it?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You give a brief answer so that the other Members would not be pressurised.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: The public sector industries, which are coming under Wagon India Ltd., are BWEL, which is located in Muzaffarpur, BWEL at Mokameh Braithwaite, Burn Standard at Burnpur, Burn Standard at Howrah and Jessop and Company. Coming to the private sector, they are CIMMCO at Bharatpur, HGI at Delhi, Modern Industry, Texmaco and HDC. These are the industries which are coming under Wagon India Ltd.

I did not answer another point. Last year, for the first time, as a test case, as I said before also, the Ministry of Railways floated open tenders for 10 per cent only, that is 1800 wagons in terms of four wheeler units. This was only 10 per cent of the total requirement of that year. As a result of this small measure, the Ministry

saved rupees three crores. This year again the difference between the Wagon India prices and that of the lowest tender is about Rs. 17,000/- per four wheeler wagon. On the total procurement of 10,800 wagons it would mean an additional burden of about Rs. 18 crores on the Ministry.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: I am glad that the Minister has mentioned the aspect of marketing in the Railways because of the competition from the roadways. I would like to remind the hon. Minister that the Public Accounts Committee has given a report on this very subject which merits his attention. Madam part (a) of my question is: Is it a fact that the Railways have a scheme called the 'Own Your Own Wagon' scheme and the wagons to be procured under this scheme have to be procured in the most economical way? So far as those who apply under this scheme are concerned, what is the arrangement made? Part (b) of my question is :

In view of the fact that the Budgetary support for the Railways has been withdrawn by the Government and the Railways have also become a commercial public enterprise, what kind of a situation do you envisage so far as procurement of wagons on competitive basis is concerned? Will it be the private sector or only the public sector keeping in view the Government policy?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, Mr. Chaturvedi and Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta have pointed out the same thing about the road traffic and the rail traffic. The Railways want to build up its wagon capacity. Because of resource constraint, it came out with a scheme for the consumers. Those who are bulk users of the wagons must be able to invest their own money under the 'Own Your Own Wagon' scheme. So, it is not the Railways which is the buyer, but it is the consumer who is the buyer. The Railways only coordinate and help them. The idea is, under the 'Own Your Own Wagon' scheme, if the consumers own a certain number of wagons to take care of their traffic, the wagons which are procured by the Railways will be available to carry high-rated commodities which can bring more revenue to the Railways.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Madam, this dispute is not about encouraging the private sector or the public sector because Wagon India itself is a consortium consisting of both the private sector and the public sector units including one State Government unit — twelve of them are there and only six of them are Central public sector units. As pointed out by the Minister if Rs. 18 crores extra have to be paid, if we follow the committed prices fixed according to the 1982 norms, then those who procure the wagons will have to suffer. The Railways procure wagons not only for themselves but also for others as Mr. Chaturvedi pointed out, under the 'Own Your Own Wagon' scheme. Here the complication arises. One of the 12 parties has floated a separate tender which is apart from the quantity allotted to Wagon India. If such a thing is allowed, then there is no meaning in the existence of the Wagon India. Will the Minister consider floating tenders for all the quantities, giving equal opportunity to all, both the public sector and private sector units? The days of protecting inefficient public sector units are gone.

Now everybody has to compete with others. As far as the West Bengal wagon industry is concerned, the employees in the private sector and the public sector are equally benefitted. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: What do you mean by that? That is not a body of the Government...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: What is he speaking, Madam?...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Madam, you have to allow us to speak...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We are not discussing here the general policy ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHR P. UPENDRA: Madam, let me clarify...(*Interruptions*)...No...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI MD. SALIM: He is not the Minister...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: He is absolutely wrong...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Let me clarify the point. They have not understood what I said...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह: मैडम, हम तो बिहार का मामला उठाने वाले थे। ...(व्यवधान) बिहार का मामला उठाने ही नहीं दिया। कमला जी बोलना चाहती थी... (व्यवधान)आपने एक बार भी हम लोगों को मौका नहीं दिया। बिहार में...(व्यवधान)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shankar Dayal Singhji, please sit down. I will allow you. Please take your seat. Mr. Upendra is not from Bihar. He happens to be from Andhra Pradesh. He is from Andhra Pradesh. So, don't make such accusations.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Madam, I want to clarify one point. What I objected to is that if one of the companies ... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister answer. Why are you getting agitated?

SHRI P. UPENDRA: My point is that one of the 2 units of the Wagon India Limited, the Hindustan Development Corporation which is a private company, has floated a separate tender, though the company a part of the Wagon India Limited. If you are allowing that, then you allow it to everybody else to submit tenders... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: You said that the public sector is gone ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. UPENDRA: No, I did not say that. I said that protection had gone.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, that is not the point ... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta, why do your speak. Let the Minister answer it. Mr. Upendra, you have a right to express your opinion. It is for the Minister, in his right, to answer the question. What decisions the Government wants to take or the Railway Ministry wants to take, is for the Minister to spell out, Hon. Members speak according to their perceptions, opinions. Let the Minister answer. Let him say what he wants to say. Why should we have an argument with Mr. Upendra? He is not the Minister. He is a Member of this House like any one of you.

SHRI MD. SALIM: What Mr. Upendra says is irrelevant ... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Never mind.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, I am glad that Mr. Upendra has pointed out this. What I want to say is that even the Railway Ministry, being a part of the Government of India, is guided by it. There is a memorandum of the Government which provides us the guidelines--Price, Purchase and Preference for Production and Serving of Public Enterprises. This was given in 1992 by the Ministry of Industry. In this, five recommendations have been made. One of them is that instead of granting price preference to public enterprises, the Government may grant purchase preference to the public enterprises. In all such cases, if the quoted price of a public enterprise is not within 10% of the lowest valid price bid, such price bids may be rejected without any further consideration. Where the quoted price is within 10% of the lowest price bid, other things being equal, purchase preference may be granted to the public enterprise concerned at the lowest valid price bid. The above purchase preference may be made applicable for a period of three years as transition period within which public enterprises should adjust themselves to the new environment of competitiveness and efficiency so that the whole policy of price-purchase preference may be withdrawn within the next three years from the date of issue of this memorandum. This is what we have been told to follow.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Kamla Sinha.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Madam, half an hour is over.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We could have had a Half-an-Hour discussion...(*Interruptions*)... I know, but I have to give change to all the people. Otherwise, Shanker Dayal Singhji will say that Bihar is being neglected.

श्री जलालुदीन अंसारी: पिछली बार भी क्वेश्चन जब ड्रॉप हुआ था, हम बोले थे, इसलिए हमें चांस मिलना चाहिए।

उपसभापति: अच्छा इनको तो बोलने दीजिए, अभी खत्म नहीं हुआ है क्वेश्चन। The question is still alive. It has not been dropped yet.

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा: मैडम, मैं सरकार से जानना चाहती हूं, सरकार ने अपने जवाब में (व्यवधान) आपकी प्रॉम्पटिंग की ज़रुरत नहीं है। मुझे अपनी समस्या के बारे में जानकारी है। सरकार ने अपने जवाब में (व्यवधान) Why is there so much of interruption, Madam?

मैडम, मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं सरकार से, सरकार ने कुछ बंगाल के कारखानों के बारे में प्रश्न का उत्तर दिया है तो मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि इन्होंने प्राइवेट सेक्टर और पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग्ज़ को दोनों को दिया है और 60 परसेंट, 40 परसेंट उससे खरीदेंगे वैगन्स। तो बिहार में दो फैक्टरियां हैं-आर्थर बटलर मुजफ्फरपुर में और भारत वैगन्स मोकामा में। इन दोनों में बहुत अच्छा प्रोडक्शन वहां हो रहा था कम्पेयरेबल टु ऐनी मार्केट प्रोडक्शन और उसके जो वेल्युएशप्स थे, वे भी बहुत अच्छे थे और रेलवे वहां से खरीद भी रही थी लेकिन सडनली दोनों जगहों से प्रोक्योरमेंट रेलवे ने बंद कर दिया। इसका क्या कारण है? क्यों ऐसा किया गया है, यह मैं जानना चाहती हूं क्योंकि इससे मज़दूरों के सामने तो समस्या उत्पन्न हो रही है और छंटाई की भी एक समस्या सामने आ रही है और कारखाना तो घाटे में चला ही जाएगा ऑबवियसली क्योंकि मार्केटिंग सीमित है, रेलवे ही खरीदती है वैगन्स।

उपसभापति: जवाब देने दीजिए।

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा: दूसरा कोई खरीददार नहीं है बाज़ार में।

उपसभापति: बोलिए मंत्री जी।

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा: रेलवे को खरीदना है और रेलवे खरीद नहीं रही है। रेलवे की ये क्या मिलीभगत है विदेशियों के साथ कि रेलवे रोड ट्रांसपोर्ट को बढ़ावा देना चाहती है और रेलवे ट्रांसपोर्ट को खत्म करना चाहती है ग्रैज्युअली। यह क्या मामला है, मैं सरकार से इस बात का क्लेरिफिकेशन चाहती हूं।

उपसभापति: मंत्री जी बोलिए।

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: In fact our efforts to enlarge the network is an ample proof of the fact that we do not want any traffic to go by road. We are more concerned about the fuel economy. We want every possible traffic to come to rail.

So far as the industries located in Bihar are concerned, Bihar, Bengal, all are equal. When we are talking about the protection of interests of the workers of public sector industries, we are taking all the industries together.

उपसभापति: श्री सच्चिदानन्द। आप पहली बार शयद क्वेश्च पूछ रहे हैं।

श्री सच्चिदानन्द: नहीं, नहीं ऐसा नहीं है।

Madam Deputy Chairman, through you I would like to ask the hon. Minister of Railways (a) whether it is a fact that amongst the private companies who had tendered, one private company, HDC, got more than 97% of the total number of wagons in 1994 and 1995 and, if so, why? Part (b)...

उपसभापति: अब आप ये ए, बी, सी मत कीजिए। because I have a problem. I have got 20 names.

SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: It is important, Madam. Is it a fact that they could not meet the conditions of the tender? They organised their own scheme and also underquoted the prices of steel and thus, achieved the L-1 position. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, there is competition in the tendering process and certain companies do quote the lowest. I think the House is fully aware of it. Having gone out of my way to protect the small industries, I became a victim myself and if the Supreme Court had not come to my rescue, I would have been in trouble. One should understand this. Madam, it is the basic policy of the Government. We are totally committed to protecting the public sector industries. There has been ....(*Interruptions*)....

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Madam...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mathur Saab, I am not permitting it.

This is not Zero Hour, please ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Madam, he has not replied to the question. Now he can reply to the question.

(व्यवधान) बोलने दीजिए, सवाल अच्छा है।

SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Prices have been udner-quoted by them. The question is very clear. He has not replied to the question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, this year we are yet to place orders. I don't think what the Member is saying is correct because we have not placed any orders as such. ...(*Interruptions*)... HDC got about 755 wagons through Wagon India Ltd. and only 1,440 wagons through tender, the total is 2,195. It is not 97%, as alleged. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Not alleged, but is more than 50%. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam, when ...(*Interruptions*)... he raised the question about...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Virumbi, No. Please sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam, I am coming to the point directly. The Minister has answered, "That is not so essential; we are able to save rupees three crores."

Madam, firstly, the Minister has accepted that the public sector has been affected. Secondly, the basic policy of the Government is to save the public sector, that is accepted. What the Minister has said is that he has acted according to the policy framed by the Ministry of Industry and he has placed the orders according to that. It is very clear that he has accepted that the public sector has been affected because of the policy pursued by the Ministry of Industry. Therefore, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will raise this matter in the Cabinet meeting at least or find out the reason why the public sector has been affected. I also want to have an assurance that the Ministry of Railways will place orders directly on competitive tenderers or on the Wagon India Ltd., and the public sector will get more wagon orders than the private sector. We know how the private sector manoeuvres to get the orders from the bureaucrats. Whether you are giving to the competitive tenderers or to the Wagon India Ltd, I want an assurance that 2/3rd of your orders would go to the public sector. I want to know whether he will give such an assurance or he will go against the public sector.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, I am sorry the hon. Member has tried to put what I have not said. What I have very clearly and categorically said is that we are protecting the interests of the public sector. I have never said that the public sector is affected. All that I have said is that the public sector should also be competitive. So, there is no point to answer it. ...(*Interrutpions*)...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam, ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Virumbi, no interruptions. I am not allowing. Nothing is going on record. I am going to close it now.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI:*

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Right at the start of the Question Hour, I had assured that 50% will go to the Wagon India to look after the interests of the public sector. ...(*Interrutpions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee. It is the last question. I am not taking up any other question.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Madam, private sector or public sector, the matter has been diluted too much. The question started only from two points. Number one, the Wagon India Ltd. is not a consortium formed by the Ministry of Railways. It is under the Ministry of Industry; it has been formed on the basis of a Cabinet decision.

Whatever rolling stock requirement was to be met, was being made from 1981 onwards through the Wagon India Limited only, whether private or public. No fifty per cent proposition was there. It was only last year, for the first time that for the rolling stock requirement open tendering was done and that too ten per cent. This year this has been made fifty per cent. How have the dicisions of 1974 and 1981 been changed? This is my first question. My second question is regarding the price. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer because I am not going to allow. ...(*Interruptions*)... the next supplementary.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: The price is not based on facts. Railways issue free materials like steel. What is being done in these factories involves the conversion cost and who determines the conversion cost? The BICP, the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, in a

* Not recorded.

committee in which the Ministry of Railways is represented, Railway Board is represented, the Ministry of Industries is represented, fixes the cost. If they want to change the cost, they are at liberty to change the cost. So, on what consideration from the last year onwards, the rolling stock requirement policy has been changed by the Ministry of Railways?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, please बैठ जाइये।

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: And what about the Ministry of Industry's letter of the 30th June, 1993, wherein she has told the same thing what I am repeating here? Is the Government running in the same manner? I do not understand it. ...(*Interruption*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: It is a speech and not a question. How can I answer it? ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the question?

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, he has asked a very specific question. The Cabinet decision was taken in 1974 and in 1981 when Shrimati Indira Gandhi the respected leader of the nation, was the Prime Minister. Why has that decision been changed now? ...(*Interruption*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIFE: Madam, when the budgetary support has gone down, naturally, any Ministry will have to do some exercise to find out how to save money and from where to get money. This is one of the processes. ...(*Interruption*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him finish.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF. The question is how we will able to save money. I have given you only one example. Out of the total requirement, it is only ten per cent which we gave to the private sector through an open tender and we got Rs. 3 crores. Now, the present indication is that we are going to save Rs. 18 crores. It is entirely for the House; you are the trustees of the public exchequer. You must take a decision. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Listen to him. I want complete silence.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Madam, I have very clearly quoted the very guidelines of the Ministry of Industry. But the hon. Member was trying to tell something else. This suits them. This is what I have to follow.

Adjustment of Unused Calls

†*682. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:
SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited recovers the amount of call charges beyond bi-monthly 150 free calls;

(b) if so, whether MTNL would consider to adjust the amount of call charges lesser than 150 bi-monthly, in the rental of the subscribers;

(c) whether the Minister or the MTNL have received several representations for adjusting the amount of unused calls in the rental or to give due credit to the subscribers;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(e) whether Government would consider to carry over the unused calls to the next bi-monthly bill, and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) A few representations had been received These were examined. It is not considered possible to accept this demand.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) The tariff had been determined after a careful consideration of fixed and variable costs of the network. Moreover, issues of tariff will now need to be considered by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

†The Question was actually asked in the floor of the House by Shremati Malti sharma.